REMARKS

The present application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated April 30, 2008. Claims 1-10 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 3, and 5 are in independent form. Claims 1-10 have been amended to define Applicant's invention more clearly. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

The Office Action states that Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,987,494 (*Ouchi*) in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0142683 (*Lam et al.*), and in further view of "Request for Comments No. 2462: IPv6 Stateless Address Autoconfiguration" (*Thomson et al.*). Applicant submits that independent Claims 1, 3, and 5, together with the claims dependent therefrom, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 1 is directed to an image processing apparatus having a plurality of image processing functions. The image processing apparatus includes (1) IP address generating means, connected to an IPv6 router on a network, for acquiring prefix information from the IPv6 router and generating an IP address unique to each of the plurality of image processing functions on the basis of the acquired prefix information; and (2) control means for communicating with a plurality of appliances on the network by use of the IP addresses generated for the plurality of image processing functions and operating each of the plurality of image processing functions via a common bus, so that the control means executes communications between each of the plurality of image processing functions and at least one of the plurality of appliances. By virtue of the structure recited in Claim 1, the architecture of the apparatus can be simplified

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compared to conventional image processing apparatuses having a plurality of image processing functions.

Ouchi relates to a multi-function device capable of concurrently processing a plurality of control programs using time sharing methods. Nothing has been found in Ouchi that teaches or suggests IP address generating means. Moreover, nothing has been found in Ouchi that teaches or suggests control means for communicating using an IP address, let alone, control means for communicating with a plurality of appliances on the network by use of the IP address generated for every image processing function.

Lam et al. relates to methods and apparatuses for providing multi-user access to devices and the Internet. Apparently, Lam et al. teaches a peripheral access router 38 including a central processing unit 62 that communicates with peripheral devices, and that information stored in a memory 64 provides a unique IP address for each of the peripheral devices (see paragraph 36). The peripheral devices shown in FIG. 2 include a camera 44, a digital video disk (DVD) player 46, a compact disk read/writer (CD-R/W) 48, a storage hard drive 50, a scanner 52, a printer 54, a copier 56, and a telephone 58 (see paragraph 35). As best understood by Applicant, the printer 54 and the copier 56 both include the same image processing function (i.e., a printer function), and the scanner 52 and the copier 56 both include the same image processing function (i.e., a scanner function). The scanner 52, printer 54, and copier 56 each have different IP addresses. Accordingly, in the system of Lam et al., the router 38 generates a unique IP address for each peripheral device, not for each image processing function. Accordingly, nothing has been found in Lam et al. that is believed to teach or suggest "generating an IP address unique to each of the plurality of image processing functions based on the acquired prefix

information," as claimed in Claim 1 (emphasis added).

Thomson et al. relates to autoconfiguration of IPv6 addresses. Nothing has been found Thomson et al. that is believed to cure the above-identified deficiencies of Ouchi and Lam et al.

Applicant submits that a combination of Ouchi, Lam et al., and Thomson et al., assuming such combination would even be permissible, would fail to teach or suggest "generating an IP address unique to each of the plurality of image processing functions based on the acquired prefix information" and "control means for communicating with a plurality of appliances on the network by use of the IP addresses generated for the plurality of image processing functions and operating each of the plurality of image processing functions via a common bus, so that the control means executes communications between each of the plurality of image processing functions and at least one of the plurality of appliances," as claimed in Claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is patentable over the cited art, and respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Independent Claims 3 and 5 include features similar to those discussed above. Therefore, Claims 3 and 5 also are believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed above.
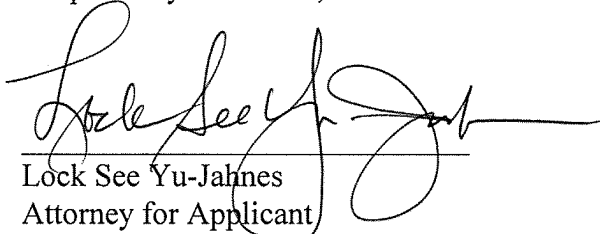
Additionally, the other rejected claims in this application depend from one or another of Claims 1, 3, and 5, and therefore are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. However, because each dependent claim also is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

This Amendment After Final Action is believed clearly to place the present application in condition for allowance. Therefore, entry of this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 is believed proper and is respectfully requested, as an earnest effort to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues. Should the Examiner believe that issues remain outstanding, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact Applicant's undersigned attorney in an effort to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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